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Bharat Ratna conferred on P V Narasimha Rao

President Droupadi Murmu on Saturday conferred the Bharat Ratna, the country's highest civilian honour, on former prime ministers P V Narasimha Rao posthumously at a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi. P V Prabhakar Rao, the son of the former prime minister, received the award | PTI

No Hand-outs, state units told to raise funds

Cash-starved Congress cuts down on advert spend in print, TV; uses social media instead

PREETHA NAIR @New Delhi

FACING heat from the Income Tax department, the cash-strapped Congress party had cut down its advertisement spending in print and electronic media for the upcoming Lok Sabha polls.

The party's High Command has already sent a missive to all the state units to mobilise funds through the door-to-door campaign or by reaching out to the people. It is also giving a big push to its election campaign through various other means such as social media platforms, influencers, and Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said the party was not able to even spend ₹2 for campaign work as it's accounts have been frozen.

In Tamil Nadu, the Congress has already started raising funds through crowdfunding, says party MP B Manickam Tagore. "We have scaled down on our expenditure on campaigns through print and visual media. It may cost ₹50 crore to run a day's campaign on national media. We don't have that kind of funds now," said Tagore. "The I-T action came as a big setback on the eve of the elections. The situation could have been handled better if we had known about it six months back," he said.

Given the lack of resources, the party is lagging behind the BJP on advert spending, points out Vaibhav Walia, chairman of the Congress war room for the Lok Sabha polls. "The first phase of elections is just 19 days away but we haven't had any major campaign in any newspaper or TV. Though we tried to give an ad on the electoral bonds, most newspapers refused to publish it," he said. "The Congress is trying to go organic mostly because of the cash crunch. We are trying to put out our content on social media," he adds.

In Kerala, as the central leadership has asked party leaders to raise funds on their own.

TWO MORE I-T NOTICES

"We got two more notices on Friday night. Today I don't know how many more we will get. We got tax notices from the time of Sitaram Kesari (1993-94). It is not surprising anymore. I get surprised if we don't receive notices," said party leader Jairam Ramesh

The Congress is trying to go organic mostly because of the cash crunch

Vaibhav Walia, Chairman of Cong war room for polls

EXPRESS READ

Road to be shut

Bengaluru: To facilitate the construction of the South-side entry structure of Lakkasandra Underground Metro station, the North-bound traffic plying on the Bannerghatta Main Road from MICO Signal, up to Anepalya Junction, will be closed for a year starting April 1.

B'luru sizzles at 36.4 deg Celsius, beats own record

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

IF YOU thought the maximum temperature of 36.4 degrees Celsius recorded on Friday was hot for Bengaluru, then hold on. It went up a notch higher on Saturday, recording 36.6 degrees Celsius, as per India Meteorological Department (IMD) records.

That is not all, Kalaburagi recorded a maximum temperature of 41.8 degrees Celsius, Bagalkot 40.9, Koppal 39.6, Raichur 40.6 and Vijayapura- 39 degrees Celsius. IMD officials said the temperature will further rise in the coming days. The officials have forecast a rise in temperatures across the state in the coming days.

On March 29, both Bengaluru city and the Kempegowda International Airport recorded a maximum temperature of 36.4 degree Celsius. IMD officials on Friday said it was the highest in the last five years. It was also the fourth highest in the last 15 years.

'FIT FOR KITCHEN'

Shamanur slammed for jibe against women

G SUBHASH CHANDRA @Davangere

SENIOR-MOST MLA in the Karnataka Assembly Dr Shamanur Shivashankarappa's recent remarks against the BJP candidate from the Davanagere parliamentary constituency, Gayathri Siddeshwara – wife of incumbent MP GM Siddeshwara, has triggered a controversy.

Addressing party workers, Shivashankarappa, who is 92 years old and is also related to Siddeshwara, questioned Gayathri's qualifications to contest the election, saying she lacks the ability to address public issues. "As you all know, she wanted to give lotus flower to Modi by winning the elections. First, let them understand the problems of Davangere. We (Congress) have done developmental work in the region. It's one thing to know how to talk, but they know only to cook in the kitchen," he said.

Responding to his comments, Gayathri listed the achievements of women in different fields and said that if she gets elected, she will show how she can work as an MP. "He said that we should only cook and remain in the kitchen. What profession women are not in today? We are even flying in the sky. The old man doesn't know how women have progressed. He doesn't know the love with which all women cook at home for men, children and elders," she shot back.

P4

Editor Prabir named accused in NewsClick case

UJWAL JALALI @New Delhi

THE Delhi Police on Saturday filed a chargesheet running into nearly 8,000 pages in the NewsClick case under the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in which Prabir Purkayastha, founder and editor-in-chief of the news-portal, is the prime accused.

According to official sources, the chargesheet which named Purkayastha and his company, PPK NewsClick Studio, as accused, includes details of the 480 electronic devices that were seized in multiple raids during the investigation.

Additional sessions judge Hardeep Kaur listed the matter on April 16 for hearing arguments on taking cognisance of the chargesheet.

Sourced told this paper that NewsClick human resources department head Amit Chakravarty has been made approver. He had in December requested in court he be made a witness.

Forest fires rage across India at 600-plus points

JITENDRA CHOUBEY @New Delhi

THERE are at least 600 forest fire points in India at present, including 30 large fire events that have been active over three days in the Central and Southern regions.

The Forest Survey of India's fire tracking portal showed on Saturday that Maharashtra has the highest number of forest fire points, followed by Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha and Chhattisgarh. In terms of large fire events, Andhra Pradesh is at the top followed by Maharashtra.

Maharashtra has 134 forest fire points, six of which have been raging for more than three days. Andhra Pradesh has eight major fire events out of 94 forest fire points. While Telangana has 82 fire points at present and five large fire events, Odisha has 63 fire points and two large fire events. (see table)

According to NASA's Fire Information for Resource Management System, the spatial resolution of the Visible Infrared Imaging Radiometer Suite (VIIRS) satellite shows that forest fires are raging nationwide especially in the Central, Western and Southern regions since the past week.

IMD scientists say high temperatures and extreme dryness provide favourable conditions for a natural fire.

MAJOR FIRE POINTS AS ON MARCH 30

STATES	FOREST FIRE POINTS
Maharashtra	134(6)
Andhra Pradesh	94(8)
Telangana	82(5)
Odisha	63(2)
Chhattisgarh	56
Uttarakhand	44
Madhya Pradesh	37(4)
Karnataka	26(1)
Rajasthan	24
Tamil Nadu	20(3)

Source: Forest Survey of India

Large fire events of at least 3 days in brackets

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Group A – Through All India Entrance Examination

- Pharm.D. (Doctor of Pharmacy) / B.Pharmacy
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- B.O.T. (Bachelor of Occupational Therapy)
- B.Sc. Nursing / Nursing (Post Basic)
- B.Sc. (Hons.) Allied Health Sciences / Cardiac Technology / Radiology and Imaging Science Technology / Radiotherapy Technology / Biomedical Sciences
- B.Optom. (Bachelor of Optometry)
- M.Sc. Medical Radiology and Imaging Technology (5-year Integrated)

Group B – Through Interview

- B.Sc. (Hons.) (4 years)
  Medical Microbiology and Applied Molecular Biology / Environmental Health Sciences / Sports and Exercise Sciences / Medical Biotechnology
- B.Sc. (4 years)
  Trauma Care Management
- B.Sc. (3 years)
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- B.Com.
- B.B.A.

Group C – Through All India Entrance Examination

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  Cyber Security and Internet of Things
  Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics
- B.Tech. Computer Science and Medical Engineering
  Artificial Intelligence and Data Analytics
- B.Tech. Electronics and Communication Engineering*

*subject to approval from AICTE

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- M.Phil. Clinical Psychology

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  Master of Physiotherapy / Master of Occupational Therapy / Master of Optometry / Master of Public Health
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	Group A	Group B	Group C	Group D	Group E
Last date for filling online applications	17.05.2024 (Friday)	22.05.2024 (Wednesday)	11.05.2024 (Saturday)	05.06.2024 (Wednesday)	20.06.2024 (Thursday)
Date of Entrance Examination / Interview	26.05.2024 (Sunday) F.N.	05.06.2024 (Wednesday) & 06.06.2024 (Thursday)	19.05.2024 (Sunday)	16.06.2024 (Sunday) F.N. M.B.A. 16.06.2024 (Sunday) A.N.	08.07.2024 (Monday) & 09.07.2024 (Tuesday)
Centre for Examination / Interview	SRIHER(DU), Porur, CHENNAI COIMBATORE MADURAI	SRIHER(DU), Porur, Chennai			

APPLY HERE

+91 7010101510 www.sriramachandra.edu.in

dracademic@sriramachandra.edu.in

No.1, Ramachandra Nagar, Porur, Chennai – 600116, Tamil Nadu.